

History News

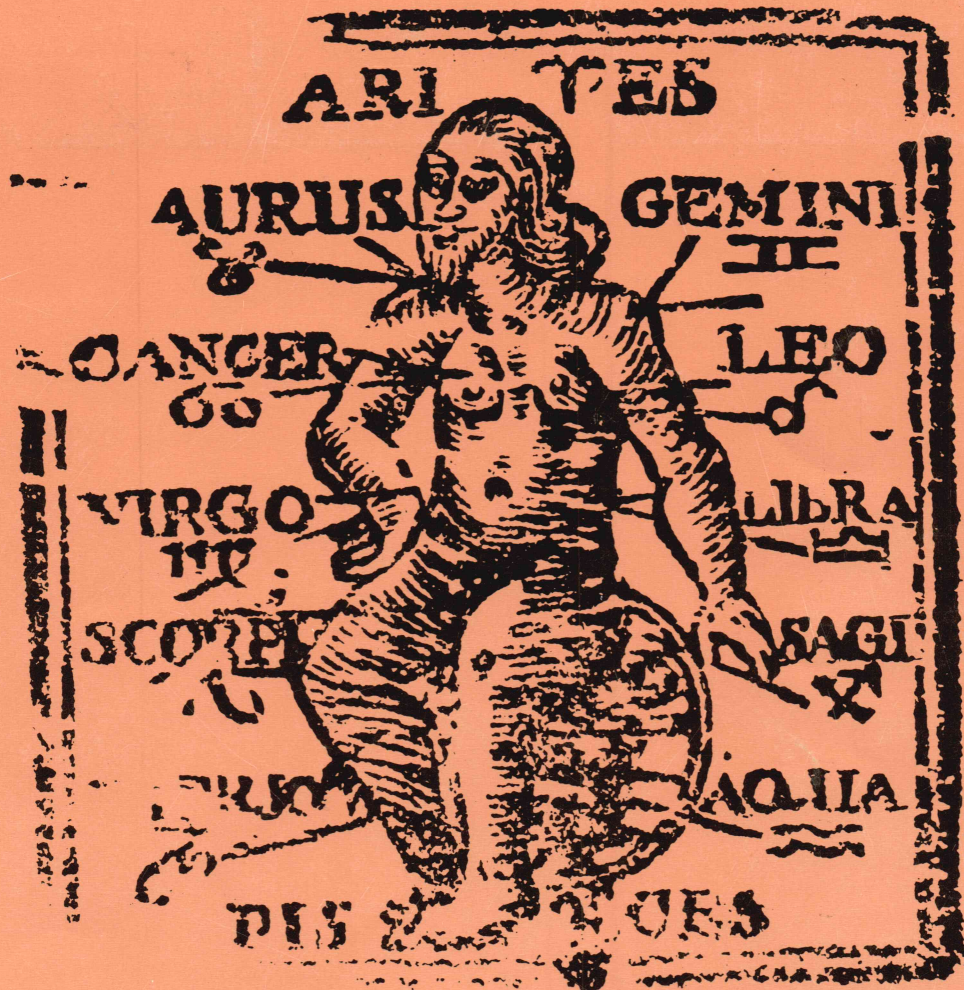
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR
STATE AND LOCAL HISTORY

Volume 41 / Number 3

May / June 1986

*The magazine for historical agency and museum
professionals and volunteers*

FOUR DOLLARS



The Fraunces Tavern Museum presents
"The Healing Arts in Early America"

The Macon County History Society struggles
with the hard realities of the 1980s

Working with Re-enactment Units
How to ensure a successful encampment

FROM THE DIRECTOR

A fund for defense

Let's be blunt.

The Congress is going to cut the federal budget. But the Congress is not going to do it equitably.

The Gramm-Rudman formula does not mean that the federal deficit will be reduced by cutting 10 percent of defense, 10 percent of agricultural subsidies, 10 percent of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and so on.

Gramm-Rudman exempts some things and forces the Congress and the administration to fight over cuts in the rest, in order to avert an automatic formula cut.

That means there's a bigger fight in Washington this year than ever. And that means that the Congress is likely to cut the most out of whatever is fought for the least.

We can't let that be us.

"Us" means those of you whom the public has made responsible for preserving this country's heritage. "Us" particularly means those of you who have had crucial grants from public agencies to do it.

You got many of those grants from these agencies:

The Institute of Museum Services, which the administration has proposed to gut by a 98 percent reduction in funds—\$28 million.

The Historic Preservation Fund, which supports state historic preservation offices, which the administration proposed to dump entirely—\$25 million.

The National Endowment for the Humanities, which the administration proposed hacking nearly 9 percent—\$12 million.

The endowment's particular grants for programs in museums and historical organizations, which the administration proposed whacking by 34 percent—\$3 million.

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission, which the administration proposed to abolish—\$4 million.

The National Museum Act, which members of the Congress itself have proposed cutting—nearly \$1 million.

There's more—but that already totals about \$63 million less in public funds for the public services you provide. And neither the administration nor the Congress argues that such cuts are equitable; only that those agencies are vulnerable.

They are vulnerable unless we argue back. At AASLH we have found some funds in our own budget to give to three organizations in Washington that are desperately trying to present our case.

The National Humanities Alliance is working on Capitol Hill to defend the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The legislative program of the American Association of Museums has been defending several grant-making agencies including the Institute of Museum Services.

The National Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History is working with others to protect the Historic Preservation Fund and the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

But they are all strapped for funds.

AASLH must do more to help them, and at least those of you who have had federal grants must help. Even by the time you read this, the battle may be slipping away.

Therefore, I ask you now to send a check to what we'll set up as the "AASLH Fair Share Fund." With a fair share of support from you, the fund will defend a fair share of support from Washington.

We will distribute every dollar you send among the three Washington lobbying organizations I listed above. Just make your check to the AASLH Fair Share Fund, send it to AASLH, 172 Second Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee 37201, and then watch here for news of the fund's progress and the Washington results.

Is your personal check for \$25, \$50, or more too much to help preserve \$63 million for your work? Is your institution's check for \$100, \$500, or more too much for defense of a public commitment at *all* levels of government to preserve our heritage. Can you afford to send less?

The AASLH Fair Share Fund—send it a "grant" for every grant from Washington you've been given. Your contribution will be one more way of saying that you believe in the public value of what you do.

Gerry George

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COVER: The Fraunces Tavern Museum in New York City has mounted a major exhibit entitled "The Healing Arts in Early America." On view through August 1, the exhibit includes this woodcut, "The Dominion of the Moon in Man's Body," by John Foster (1648-1681), from the collections of the Watkinson Library of Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. From the middle of the 15th century, according to the exhibit catalogue, "European physicians correlated medicine with the movement of the heavens." This woodcut is "the first American example of what was to become a standard illustration in American almanacs of the 18th century." It "depicts a naked man with markers that associated specific regions of the body with the various signs of the zodiac." Photograph courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society.

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LETTERS

Building bridges

We at the National Genealogical Society welcome Charles F. Bryan Jr.'s "In My Opinion" article in the January 1986 issue of HISTORY NEWS in which he counsels historical societies to begin building bridges to the genealogical community.

Genealogists, a significant cross-section of the American people, are here to stay. We are not all "mere compilers of names and dates." Many of us are family historians, eager to learn as much as possible about our ancestors' lives. In many cases, the pursuit of family history awakens an interest in local history that was not there before.

Genealogists have much to learn from the historical community and much to offer it. We yield to no one in our interest in the widest variety of source records. In area after area across the country, genealogists have taken the lead in efforts to preserve records and make them available to researchers. On the national level, historians, archivists, and genealogists worked together in the successful effort to establish the independence of the National Archives and Records Administration.

Family history and local history are inextricably intertwined. Genealogists want to work with historians as we pursue the compilation and documentation of the histories of our communities and families. Might I suggest that one of the first steps toward a new spirit of cooperation and mutual respect be the banning of the term "genie" from the historian's lexicon!

VARNEY R. NELL
PRESIDENT
NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

HISTORY NEWS's progress

A word to greet you as the new editor of HISTORY NEWS. I have a direct interest in this change at AASLH. You see, I was the original editor of what was then called *State and Local History News*, 1943-1948. At that time I was assistant director and librarian of the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore. The bulletin was an entirely voluntary affair, printed on decent paper without illustra-

tions. I prepared the text in Baltimore and sent it to Washington to be printed—not an entirely satisfactory way of doing things, but the best then available. I have been delighted to see the progress of the magazine to professional status, with better paper and good illustrations.

WILLIAM D. HOYT
ROCKPORT, MASSACHUSETTS

"The rich get richer"

On behalf of myself and the "small" museums in Nebraska, please accept my sincere thanks to you, the Council, and the AASLH office for expressing concern in the February issue of HISTORY NEWS DISPATCH about the recent trend in the Institute of Museum Services's grant allocations.

Although Cindy Sherrell-Leo of the Texas Historical Commission mentioned that AASLH was undertaking a survey of IMS granting practices at the council meeting of the Mountain-Plains Museums Association last October and gave us some of the preliminary information, I was astounded at the figures that were printed. They do, however, confirm my own thoughts that the "big get bigger" or, as you stated, "the rich get richer."

MICHAEL W. BROOSLIN
CHAIR
NEBRASKA MUSEUMS ROUNDTABLE
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

Curators, beware!

So far the new Technical Reports have been very good, but TR 5, "Management of Photograph Collections in Historical Agencies and Museums," contains one suggestion that I find objectionable from a conservator's point of view. The basic reference books listed are sound works, with one exception: *Caring for Photographs: Display, Storage and Restoration*, published by Time-Life Books.

Any text that explicitly tells readers to stick tintypes up on walls with double-sided tape, or to spray Krylon on photographs, for any reason, should not be

recommended without a caveat. The book is not wholly bad, but its misinformation might lead to situations in which the artifacts are irreparably damaged. Let the curator beware!

ROBIN D. GILLIAM
REGISTRAR
RIVERSIDE MUNICIPAL MUSEUM
RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

Exhibit standards

Your September cover, while leading off a valuable discussion about museums reviving contentious events from the recent past, does so in a manner that raises questions about the display techniques that are encouraged by your magazine.

I count four main headlines each followed by more than 50 words of text, eleven text panels each with about 30 words of text, a dozen or so artifacts with extensive texts describing them, about a dozen photographs, half a dozen three-dimensional artifacts and artifact groups, and a video unit—all in a space perhaps eight feet across.

How much staff time did it take to write all those captions? How many visitors read them? How many people look at a video so low to the ground? Who can see the low displays? How can the mind take in so many images at once?

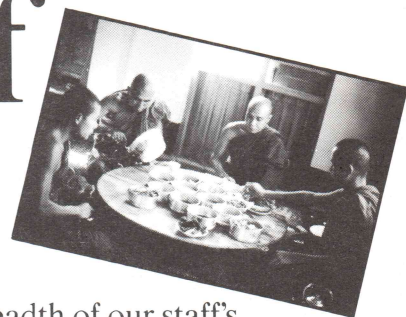
In no way is this comment meant as criticism of displaying the controversial recent past; it merely intends to raise the question of what standards should be applied to judge museum exhibit techniques.

EDWARD VON DER PORTEN
SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA

AASLH Council and Officer Nominations

For a complete list of the AASLH nominating committee's slate of nominees for AASLH vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and four council seats, please see the May issue of HISTORY NEWS DISPATCH.

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Making Money for Macon County's History

The Macon County Historical Society contends with the hard facts of fund raising in the 1980s

The Macon County Historical Society presents both permanent and temporary exhibits in the former Excelsior School building. Shown here is a portion of the exhibit depicting the "Prairie Years" in the county.



BY CANDACE FLOYD

The Macon County Historical Society in Decatur, Illinois, entered the museum business more than ten years ago. In operation off and on since 1916, the society offered the usual array of monthly meetings and educational programs until 1976 when it enlisted the aid of a consultant, Thurman Fox, at that time the museum director at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Paid with funds from the AASLH Consultant Service, Fox helped the society convert an eight-room school building into a museum. Working alongside the professional staff was a group of volunteers, mostly retired people with time and talent on their hands, spearheaded by Martha Montgomery, George Newland, and Florence White, residents whose community connections assured that local fund raising would be successful. Montgomery, too, was particularly aware of professional museum standards because of her brother, Charles Montgomery, director of the Winterthur Museum from 1954 to 1970.

What the society accomplished in the ensuing years is remarkable. It retired all indebtedness against two buildings and more than five acres of land. It raised a \$22,000 endowment fund. It published three history books and began an ongoing schedule of temporary exhibits and more extensive educational programs.

But that was during a time when even small, new historical societies and museums lived fairly close to Easy Street. Communities rallied behind heritage efforts, particularly during the years immediately before and after the bicentennial of the American Revolution. Federal programs, such as the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Institute of Museum Services, eagerly supported such efforts. Other federal programs, like the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the



A volunteer demonstrates wood carving to a young visitor to the Macon County Historical Society's annual fund-raising event—the Yesteryear Fair.

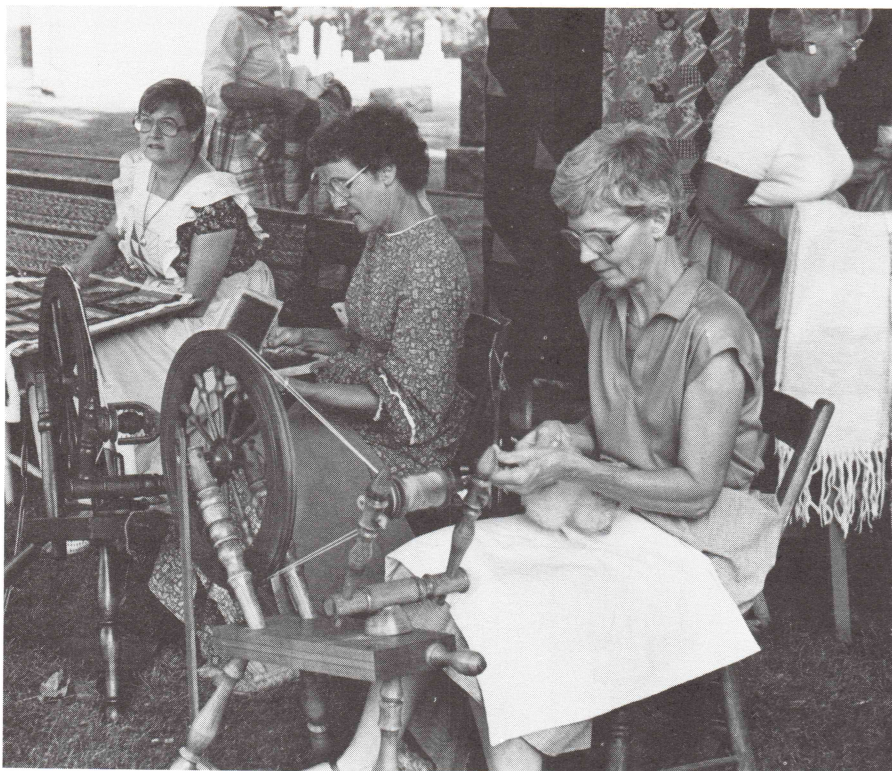
Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, while not created specifically to aid cultural programs, actually did by supplying needed funds for restoration projects and personnel for programs.

Catherine Bruck, director of the Macon County society from February 1984 to December 1985, notes two turning points in its history—one quite distinct, the other rather subtle. The first came in 1976, when the society's board made a commitment to a professionally run organization, hiring a director, Carola Rupert (now director of the Kern County Museum in Bakersfield, California), straight out of the museum studies program at the University of Delaware. The second—"a gradual sort of thing"—came while Bruck herself was director. "It seemed to me that the volunteers, who had been involved in the society for years, were now also involved in other activities," she says. "Many are able to spend their vacations away from Decatur and

travel extensively. And many were involved in other charitable and social activities. Their discretionary time and income were diverted away from the society, which at one time was the only thing in town." Additionally, the Institute of Museum Services, having given the society two general operating support grants between 1978 and 1980, denied the society's request for \$22,000 in 1985, breaking a string of successful grant proposals submitted not only to IMS but to NEH as well.

The Macon County Historical Society, like thousands of other county groups that prospered because of abundant federal funds, now faces some difficult transition years. Founded at a time when the feds were not only generous with support but were even creating new granting programs like IMS, the Macon County group flourished. It now must contend not only with fierce competition for federal funds but with the increasing number of volun-

Candace Floyd is editor of HISTORY NEWS. All photographs accompanying this article are courtesy of the Macon County Historical Society.



In all, the Macon County Historical Society receives help from about 200 to 500 volunteers, such as these women who demonstrate spinning and quilting at the Yesteryear Fair.

teer opportunities from which community residents may choose and the aging of its core group of volunteers, so active for more than a decade.

A history of support

The society, serving the 150,000 residents of Decatur and Macon County, was chartered in 1971. Before that time, the organization "phased in and out as time and interest increased or waned," according to Bruck. The move to formalize the structure of the society came about when some long-term members decided to bring it up to a more active level.

And during the '70s, community support was high. In 1970 the society bought the North Fork Presbyterian Church building and the three-acres on which it sat for \$14,000, and by 1975, through various fund-raising activities, paid off that mortgage. On the heels of that success, in 1975 the society bought the Excelsior School building for \$34,000 and decided to turn that facility into an exhibit center. Some members of the society thought that the mortgage would never be paid off in their lifetimes. But it was paid off by 1979 when the exhibit center opened. Along with the school building came a two-acre back lot, which the society determined would be used for "Prairie Village." The village now boasts six historic

structures and a new gazebo, built entirely with donated funds and materials.

To help fund the plans and installations at the exhibit center, the society turned to a source many county organizations have successfully drawn on since 1965—the National Endowment for the Humanities. The society received \$14,453 in 1976 through a planning grant and began work on the exhibit center. That year, Fox visited the society as a consultant from the AASLH Consultant Service. Next came an NEH challenge grant in June 1977. The society raised \$171,000 to match the \$57,000 it received from NEH in far less than the three-year grant period. The level of support the society received to match the challenge grant was "astounding," according to Bruck. Then NEH supported the actual implementation of the plans it had paid for by granting the organization \$25,160 in November 1977.

That year, it also received money from the Department of Housing and Urban Development—\$36,000 to install ramps to give handicapped visitors access to the new exhibit center. The society also had several CETA employees during the '70s, including Shirley Oseland, who is the current registrar, paid with earned income these days instead of with CETA money.

The society's efforts to get needed sup-

plies and materials have earned it a reputation as being the best scrounger in town. Whenever a store or school closes down, the society moves in quickly to snatch up display cases or other furniture it needs.

For some projects the group received unexpected support. When the Stephen Decatur High School closed, several members decided to take the large mural from the school's library and preserve it for display in the museum. After much debate, the society's board voted to spend \$12,000 for professional conservation work on the mural. At the opening of the exhibit center in 1979, a representative of the Millikin Estate Trust asked how much the society still owed on the mural and then sent a check to the society to pay the balance due for the conservation work.

The society used general operating support money, received from the Institute of Museum Services in two grants, to erect a security fence around the Prairie Village site, among other things. The third IMS grant proposal, submitted in 1985, was turned down, not because of any "glaring" flaws in the society, according to Bruck, but because of the increased competition for funds.

The society has received money from Macon County for ten years to pay the salary of a professional curator or director. But for most of its operating income, the group relies on a wide variety of fund-raising activities, including the annual Yesteryear Fair, which nets \$10,000 or \$12,000 a year. Bob Bond, current president of the society, calls the fair "one of the most successful projects in the community."

Each Labor Day weekend for the past 16 years, the society has hosted the fair, which includes craft displays, a flea market and food concessions. The society brings in outside vendors for the craft booths, but it handles the food sales itself, selling apple butter, about 150 pounds of homemade horseradish, and other food. Vendors contribute 25 percent of their gross sales or \$25, whichever is greater, to the society. In the past, volunteers spent a good deal of energy lining up craft booths, but now they concentrate more on entertainment, so the 20,000-30,000 people who come each year, "depending on the weather," will find new offerings, according to Bond.

A long-time society member, Dale Willets, coordinates another fund-raising event—the annual Yesteryear Antique Show and Sale, which nets almost \$3,000

a year. He invites antique dealers from Illinois and the surrounding states to rent booths in the Masonic Lodge for a weekend. The society again receives a percentage of the gross sales and exhibit booth rental fees from vendors as well as admission fees from the public.

By 1984, when Bruck became director, the society boasted an operating budget of almost \$150,000 and a net worth of almost \$400,000. In addition to the Yesteryear Antique Show and the Yesteryear Fair, income-producing activities included rummage sales, used book sales, recycling newspapers, sales in the gift shop of items made by volunteers, and direct mail and telephone campaigns. Bruck turned to these last two activities because she felt many of the others required too much effort for too little return. In 1984 the net amounts raised from the various activities included \$2,876 from the Yesteryear Antique Show and Sale, \$3,210 from rummage sales, \$9,850 from the Yesteryear Fair, \$5,752 from the sale of the history books, \$2,035 from recycling efforts, \$2,244 from the gift shop sales, and \$2,867 from the used books sales. Additionally, the society earned \$5,040 in membership dues and \$8,598 from investments and rentals, lunches, dinners, and bake sales.

While earned income remained fairly steady from 1983 to 1984, when \$48,714 and \$42,472 were brought in respectively, the society has suffered in the category of support. In 1983 the society received \$36,211 in contributions and memorials. In 1984, that amount went down to \$25,595. And while Macon County support went up from \$20,027 in 1983 to \$24,897 in 1984, the amount the society received in state and local grants for specific projects, such as restoration or printing brochures, decreased from \$16,425 in 1983 to \$2,714 in 1984.

Services for the community

Not all of the society's activities are carried out with dollars in mind, of course. The society maintains active educational and exhibit programs for its constituents. For its education programs, the society enlists the aid of volunteer Lee Skelley and others. During the major program, "Life on the Prairie," held each May, third-graders come to the society to see demonstrations and hear stories about county history. The program lasts six days, and each group of school children stays for an hour and a half. Volunteers handle all the interpretation and demonstrations. "If you don't have volunteers, you

can't get the job done," Bond explains. In all, the society benefits from the services of 200 to 500 volunteers, "depending on what we're asking them to do and what time of year it is." Even the lower number is remarkable in light of the society's total membership of about 800.

Montgomery agrees with Bond's assessment of the volunteers. "They are our most valuable asset," she says.

The society won an award of merit from AASLH in 1980 for its exhibit center, housed in the Excelsior School building. Since then, the group has presented a wide variety of exhibits. Recent offerings include "Underthings and Other Things," an exhibit of women's underwear from the society's collections; "Fine Featherless Fowl," an exhibit of decoys gathered from area collectors, carvers, and artists; and "Burial Customs," an exhibit that drew on the Illinois Funeral Directors Association for artifacts. For each of the exhibits, the society published a catalogue, featuring historical background, self-guided tour information, a bibliography, and, in the case of the underwear exhibit, an exhibit inventory.

Troubled times

Bruck left the society last December to direct the Elmhurst Historical Museum in Elmhurst, Illinois. Although a new director of the Macon County society has not been hired, Bond hopes to have a new person at work sometime this spring. Before the society advertised the position, it had already received resumes from four people. Encouraged by this response, Bond notes that good people "are out there; we've just got to find the right one."

The society's programs continue even though a day-to-day administrator is not on board. The society just mounted a circus exhibit in its gallery, and in April, it held its annual Yesteryear Antique Show. Plans are in full swing for the Yesteryear Fair, to be held in September, and the society is getting ready for the annual influx of third-graders.

For all its income-producing programs, the society has "a potentially fatal reliance on soft money—contributions and fund-raising activities," according to the 1985 Museum Assessment Program field surveyor's report. Arthur M. Feldman, director of the Spertus Museum of Judaica, visited the society through the MAP program, which IMS funds and the American Association of Museums administers. He recommended that the group "define more carefully responsibilities for fund raising, outlining both Board

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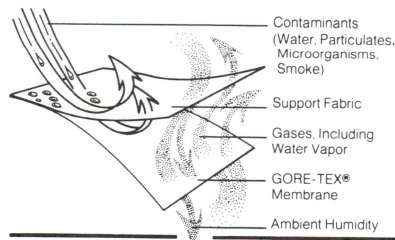
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responsibility as well as that of the staff director."

Bruck entered the assessment program with long-range planning in mind. She had hoped to spur the board on to begin the planning process through the assessment, and Feldman included a discussion of the need for planning in his report:

"A development plan with short- and long-term goals and objectives should be produced and adopted by the Board. The approved plan should clearly specify who or what body is responsible for what fund-raising aspects and to what amounts. A development committee should be part of this specific plan, and [its] specific charge should be for all local fund raising and peer contacts."

Additionally Feldman reported that a "special membership committee should be created and established to accommodate the giving potential of a large number of members, and far more members should be actively recruited from the local area."

The society, according to Bond, has begun the initial steps for long-range planning, contracting with a retired executive to do a preliminary document. "But these are the months the older people in Decatur go to Arizona," and apparently the retired executive left town without turning in a copy of the plan to the society. As soon as he returns, the society's members will begin adding their own input. Bond hopes for a flexible document, a characteristic he thinks is necessary, "especially for an organization that relies on donations."

Bond believes that the society will need to branch out from its core group of volunteers and start attracting young people to support and operate the society's programs. "The older people have run their programs so well through the years, but now that these people are going off into the yonderland," the society will need to make adjustments. In the last several months, he says, "We're discovering that there are some young people who are interested." And once the new volunteers are on board, "We need to let them do things their way instead of just copying the former programs. I think the younger people were afraid they'd step on someone's toes before."

The society has earned a reputation within the community as a going concern by doing what many other small organizations have done—it has sought support from all levels of government and from every conceivable local source. It has also turned to professionals for needed direc-

tion. In fact, not only the professional staff, but many of the society's members as well, have attended the AASLH annual meeting for several years for the professional development opportunities the meeting offers. Three NEH grants, two IMS grants, funds from HUD, a consultant from AASLH, and personnel paid for by CETA, all spurred the society on to success in the 1970s.

Macon County's story is a familiar one. Many county and city history groups, and even some state organizations, across the country have developed, in Feldman's words, "a fatal reliance on soft money." They now face the hard realities of decreasing governmental support at all levels—federal, state, county, and city.

In the communities themselves, more and more museums or cultural programs means fewer and fewer volunteers to support each of the activities. Museums and historical societies have to plan into their programs ways to attract new volunteers. The 50-year-old community leaders of 1970 have now reached retirement age, and societies like Macon County's have to be fast on their feet to keep these peo-



The Macon County Historical Society operates Prairie Village, a outdoor living history site that includes the log house, above, five other historical structures, and a new gazebo.

ple in town working on society programs and out of the winter resorts.

Funding programs of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum Services, the Department of Housing and Urban Develop-

ment, and the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, all were geared, directly or indirectly, in the 1970s to support the work of the ever increasing number of local efforts to preserve and interpret history. While NEH and IMS

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have not turned their backs on these kinds of efforts, appropriations for museums and historical organizations at NEH, at least, have not kept pace with the growing numbers of organizations seeking support.

In 1981, the first year for which NEH has computerized data on its grant programs, the endowment made 154 grants (out of 386 applications) totaling \$9.482 million through its museums and historical organizations program. In 1985 NEH made 122 grants (out of 458 applications) totaling \$9.568 million through the program. So while applications were up almost 19 percent, the total amount awarded increased only 1 percent and the number of approved applications decreased by 19 percent. This year, NEH has \$8.39 million to award through the museums and historical organizations program—a decrease of 12 percent from 1985. NEH awards funds through the program for such things as exhibit planning and installation and lecture series among many other types of programs.

IMS has fared better than NEH in the long run. In 1978, the first year the institute had money to award, IMS gave \$3.65

million to 252 museums or related organizations (out of 831 applications) through the general operating support category. In 1985 IMS gave \$16.77 million for general operating support to 451 museums or related organizations (out of 1,264 applications). While GOS funds increased over the years and while IMS periodically added new grant categories, such as those for conservation and special projects, the institute has begun to have trouble defending its appropriations. This year GOS money has been cut back to \$15.984 million. And while the Reagan administration's budget for FY 1987 was defeated by Congress this spring, the amount the budget included for IMS—\$330,000—indicates the difficulty lying ahead for the agency.

Money available to communities from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Block Grants, through which the Macon County society received funds for building handicapped access ramps, has dwindled from \$3.7 billion in 1980 to \$3.4 billion in 1985 to \$2.6 billion in 1986—\$1.1 billion in six years.

CETA funds, too, were taken away from

cultural organizations that depended on them. During the '70s, CETA placed possibly thousands of young people in jobs at museums and other public service organizations, but in 1983 the program was replaced by the Job Training Partnership Act. Through private industry councils and locally elected officials, JPTA provides businesses with funds to cover part of the costs incurred in training young people for jobs but does not pay salaries.

Even national service organizations, such as AASLH, are no longer able to keep up the high level of some services they provided in the 1970s when they received more federal support. Through the Consultant Service, funded by the National Museum Act, AASLH sent 45 consultants to museums and historical agencies in 1976 when Fox visited Macon County. This year AASLH has funds from NMA to support 15 consultant visits.

And directors and boards of once thriving historical societies, and others charged with the preservation of local heritage, look around their communities and wonder who's going to pay. **HN**



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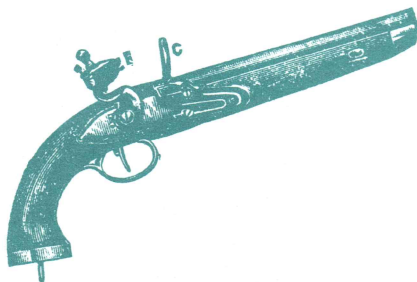
Re-enactors and History

Attention to detail can ensure accurate re-enactments

BY CAROL C. DEAKIN

The dead rose from the tall grass and underbrush of the field and, along with their military commander, turned to accept the applause of the visitors. Hokey? Poor museum education? By itself, of course, the scene typifies only popular entertainment. As a small part of a two-day military encampment that included social as well as military history, involved academics from a local university in the planning, and drew 4,000 visitors to a small historic site, the scene may have been an appropriate end to an enjoyable, as well as educational, experience.

Re-enactment groups consist of volunteers who portray military units that existed in the past. Historic site administrators began to notice such groups during the centennial of the Civil War in the 1960s. The bicentennial of the American Revolution produced approxi-



mately 400 re-enactment units across the country. Re-enactment groups look to historic sites of all sizes for the settings they need for period encampments, but some site managers have shied away from engaging such groups in site events because many history professionals question the authenticity of the groups' historical portrayals. There are ways, however, for site managers to ensure that re-enactment groups meet the educational standards of professionally run sites.

Re-enactment groups are part of the interpretive movement commonly known as "living history." The individuals who belong to re-enactment units come from all walks of life. Most groups contain a few teachers, professional historians, and museum interpreters. Professional historians add depth to re-enactment groups, but their involvement does not guarantee that the groups will present good educational performances. What is

more important to the success of the groups is strong leadership that communicates and enforces standards.

Site administrators should think of the members of re-enactment groups as actors rather than as practitioners of living history. As actors, re-enactment groups need a stage and set. Your historic site may be the ideal setting. Control of the stage and set is your leverage to demanding a performance equal to the educational standards of your institution. You cannot, however, use that leverage without adequately communicating what those standards are.

Working successfully with re-enactment units offers the historic site three basic benefits. A special event may increase revenue for the site. It may provide a variation or enhancement of the site's daily interpretation. And the event may attract a new audience to the site.

The historic site as stage

Whether you are approached by a re-enactment unit that requests permission to appear at your site or you plan to approach a unit, you must first consider the history and physical arrangement of your site. Is an appearance by a unit a logical extension of your interpretive plan?

Carol C. Deakin is the coordinator of volunteers for the Division of Historic Preservation, Fairfax County Park Authority in Fairfax, Virginia. She holds a master's degree in history from George Mason University and is a contributing editor of Living History magazine. In 1981, she was the coordinator of an encampment of 4,000 re-enactors at Yorktown in Virginia.



Division of Historic Preservation, Fairfax County Park Authority.

Sully Plantation, the late-18th-century home of Richard Bland Lee, provided space for an encampment of 300 re-enactors.

Can you justify the appearance, even by stretching your imagination, on historical grounds? Do you have the space to provide an adequate stage and setting for the unit and comfort and safety for the audience?

A 17th-century militia drill at a home restored to the mid-19th century adds nothing but show-biz flash to the site. Nothing is added to an 18th-century fort by an appearance of 20th-century infantrymen. Match the time period of the unit to the primary period of your site. If the site has been restored to show changes in the structure over a period of time, you may select a particular period of the site, not often emphasized, to be enhanced by an encampment.

You may stretch the historical justification as long as the members of the unit are well informed of that justification and as long as you fully inform the visitors. If you have information about the impact of one or more wars on the former residents of your historic house, you might justify a period military encampment that interprets the impact of war on the families. In this case, you have an obligation to let the public know that troops did not come as close to the house as is depicted by the re-enactment, but that the re-

enactors represent, physically, the impact felt by people in that period of time. You should begin this kind of scene-setting with your press release and reinforce it with handouts and the messages delivered by interpreters working at the site.

Re-enactors are interested in stressing the interpretive themes of sites by demonstrations or by first-person discussions or role-playing. Civil War or Revolutionary War soldiers may talk to the visitors about their professions as farmers or craftsmen before their service in the military. Or they may demonstrate the crafts they practiced as civilians. Women and children who are part of the unit may provide demonstrations, either in the encampment itself or at its border, to show everyday life during wartime. As the site administrator, you are responsible for determining the authenticity of the demonstrations.

The more difficulty you have justifying a period military encampment, the more you should rely on the interpretive talent within a re-enactment unit. Do the members have civilian dress as well as military uniforms? Can they "people" your site to create a general period atmosphere rather than a military atmosphere? Will their demonstrations add to your interpretive

theme? A unit may have interpreters versed in spinning, dying yarns, the use of herbs, period medicine, and women's and children's activities. Role-playing interpreters within a group may provide vignettes tailored to your site.

Justification is, of course, very easy if, at one time, troops actually camped in the area or battles swirled around the site. A fort and a home of a military leader are obviously appropriate sites for encampments.

Next, consider the space you have available. An appearance by a re-enactment group may draw more visitors than you can handle. Do you have parking to accommodate more visitors? Will you need to order portable toilets for a large crowd? Will visitors stay longer than usual and need additional food vendors or need to be advised to bring lunch?

The re-enactment unit should provide you with the dimensions of the space it requires for the period encampment. The area should be large enough to contain the portable sets and props. This space should be away from modern intrusions, such as a highway that runs along one side of the site, but it should be easily accessible to visitors. There must be hidden parking for cars and trucks that bring

the unit's equipment to the site. Some members of the unit may sleep in cars, campers, or modern tents, so you will need to provide space for them out of sight of the period encampment.

The encampment is often the centerpiece of an event where the day-to-day lives of soldiers and their families are shown. The encampment is theater-in-the-round and should be located with that in mind. While you must rope off the camp for security and safety, the divider should be placed near enough to the center of activity so the public can get a close look. The rope also provides some controls around campfires where children might be hurt and eliminates public access to powder storage. The rope divider also gives the illusion of a space in which time is different. Role-playing interpreters may step out of character by walking outside the line and into the 20th century.

If the unit plans to re-enact a battle or fire guns in a demonstration, you need a space that lends itself to the theater of the battle. The area you set aside for the audience must be a safe distance away but close enough to provide a clear view of the theatrics. Use fencing or rope barriers

to keep visitors and photographers off the stage.

The group's background

Before inviting a re-enactment unit to your site, you must understand volunteerism and group dynamics. Every contact with representatives of the group will give you insight that will be helpful in developing a good program and forming a long-term relationship with the group.

During the first contact with a representative of the unit, request copies of the group's training manuals, authenticity and safety regulations, newsletters to members, appearance schedule for the next several months, and references. Ask if the group has liability insurance, although you will probably find that few have it because of its high price. If the group does not have insurance, you may want to purchase insurance yourself for the event.

If the group has existed for several years and can produce none of these items, it probably lacks cohesive leadership, and you may find it difficult to communicate effectively with the members. Without strong leadership, you may have trouble

persuading the members of the group to comply with contractual agreements and to interpret the themes you specify. Some groups are made up of highly individualistic people who have not made full commitments to the groups' efforts or goals. Often site administrators who work with these groups become convinced that re-enactors are not serious interpreters of history.

If a group that is unable to produce the documents listed above is young and your contact with them shows that they are anxious to learn, you may have a good opportunity to train the unit to your educational standards. A relationship between a unit and a historic site, developed early in the life of the unit, may result in long-term, high quality programs. You will, of course, need to spend a good deal of time leading the group through research and interpretive training.

Call the references the group provides. Other historic site administrators will be able to tell you about the quality of the interpretation and authenticity of the group's performance. Other site administrators may also answer such questions as: Did the unit respect the integrity of the

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site? Was the campsite kept clean of modern trash? Did the group's members spend time with the public, instead of chatting with one another?

Another excellent way to get information about the group is to observe it at an event at another site. Watch for the members' interaction with the public. Listen to what they are saying. Look for modern intrusions in camp or on members, and make notes. You may want to specify in your written contract that modern watches on the members be eliminated and coolers in the camp at least be hidden. Lack of interaction with the public, though, is more serious. It indicates that the group is not interested in interpretation and education.

Do the members of the group look right? Have they used the right fabric to reproduce clothing? Are the lines of the garments correct? A zipper in a polyester gown or gray wash-and-wear work pants on a Civil War figure are immediate clues that the group has not achieved authenticity in its costuming—the most basic form of interpretation. Are the third-person interpretations or demonstrations of the group accurate? Do they cover more



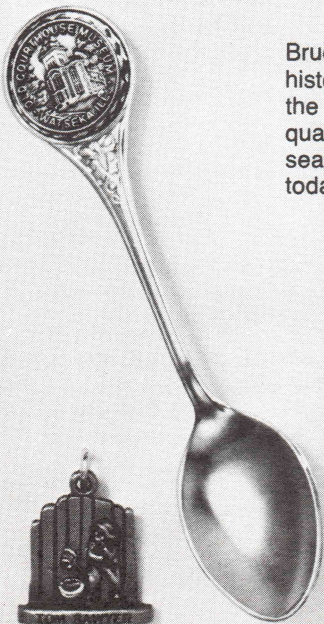
A surgeon's kit includes artifacts to interpret period medicine following a re-enactment of a battle.

than the facts and lead the visitor to think about the reasons behind the actions and attitudes of the period? If the group demonstrates crafts, do they use reproduction artifacts? Original artifacts should rarely, if ever, be used at encamp-

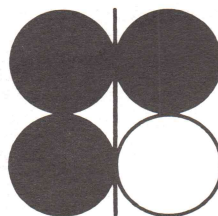
ments, nor should the group demonstrate crafts or skills with modern equipment. Also make sure the group hides storage containers and cooking pots or replaces them with period reproductions. Your contract with the group should clearly

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state your requirement for authenticity at your historic site.

When you visit the group during an encampment at another site, pay close attention to the educational content of first-person interpretation. Note the use of period phrases and accents. One common difficulty occurs when method acting produces a character who reacts from 20th-century values and attitudes rather than from the values and attitudes of the period being portrayed.

Review the training manual and authenticity and safety regulations before observing the group. During your visit, check to see if the regulations are enforced. Does the group store powder in small amounts in metal containers away from the campfire? Do members conduct a safety inspection of weapons before firing them? If the group has fully developed documents, such as a training manual, its members probably have a serious commitment to interpretation and safety.

The volunteer group

If you work with volunteers on a regular basis, you are probably familiar with the three motivations for volunteering. The ideal re-enactment unit will contain members from all three motivational groups.

Many members of the group are affiliation-motivated. They enjoy the social aspects of being part of a successful group. They are easily led to do a job well if given direction. Their reward is being a member of the group and enjoying the camaraderie.

Achievement-motivated members want more than being part of a group. They want to achieve goals that will add to their own and the group's esteem. They often learn period skills or crafts for demonstrations or provide unit members with reproduction uniforms or camp articles. Ask if any members reproduce items used by the unit. When you observe the encampment, you may find a member playing the role of a doctor. Another may demonstrate the use of herbs. Others may interpret sewing, cooking, or period child care. These are all achievement-motivated individuals who, as potential craftspeople, may add more to an event at your site if you encourage them to emphasize their skills and knowledge. You may want to provide space in a building for a few craftspeople because some people who work with materials that are easily damaged hesitate to demonstrate their crafts outdoors.

Many achievement-motivated re-

enactors engage in first-person interpretation or role-playing and enjoy the challenge of research and the attention they receive from the visitors. Be sure to ask for outlines of any vignettes the group plans to perform. A group may plan to stage a wonderfully accurate court martial, hanging, and burial that would appall and disgust your visitors. Dressing a chicken in camp would be good, accurate history, but such a demonstration might create problems with the local animal league. While you may be in an area where these kinds of dramatizations are acceptable, you should know in advance the details of all vignettes, anticipate problems, and plan how you will handle them. Once the action begins upon the site, you are responsible. The stage is, after all, your historic site.

Many female members of re-enactment units are achievement-oriented. Because period military chains-of-command do not offer leadership positions to women, potential leaders who are women frequently express their abilities by researching, learning, and demonstrating period skills. Although appropriate to the period, these demonstrations may not be appropriate to a military encampment, so you may want to move the demonstration area away from the campsite.

Power-motivated members become the officer corps. If these leaders have considerable administrative ability, you will probably have a good event. They will see that contractual agreements made for your event are followed, and they will communicate the details and requirements for the event to all group members. Power struggles within a group, or leaders who are not administrators, often result in mismanaged events. A young group that lacks power-motivated leaders may be led by you for a period of time. Or, as the grantor of the stage and set needed for the unit's performance, you may empower a rising leader by working with that individual and making clear to other unit members that appearances at your site are dependent on the group's granting power to that individual.

Working together

After you determine that your site is an appropriate setting and after you locate a group to work with, you are ready to draw up a formal agreement for an appearance. The date should be set six months or more in advance to allow time for the group to plan its interpretation and to disseminate information. Most good, mature re-enactment groups are booked one year

in advance.

As the historic site manager, you should write an agreement and appearance plan to protect yourself and your site. In the document, clearly state the mission, goals, and interpretive plan of the site and take into account the goals of the re-enactors. Also define and list the expectations of both the historic site and the unit for the specific program you are suggesting. The agreement and plan will be of little use unless each individual member of the re-enactment unit understands the content. Whether you communicate the expectations to the unit or leave the communication up to the unit leader depends on your assessment of the unit's character and the unit commander's strength. Unless the commander guarantees advance mailing of the plans to all group members, ask for the unit mailing list, duplicate the agreement and plan, and mail them to everyone on the list.

You may want to involve local social studies teachers or university history professors in the encampment. One way to ensure that individuals within a unit, or units within a large encampment, strive for good interpretation is to provide formal judging during the event and present awards. If the judges are from the academic community and help in the planning process by stating their educational expectations, there will be greater historical depth to the interpretation.

Historic site administrators should be aware of the costs incurred by the individuals and the group. In most cases, individual members finance their own period clothing and equipment. Most re-enactors invest \$500 to \$1,000 in their personal outfitting. Camp equipment, such as cooking pots, tents, and furniture, may be owned by individual members or by the group. If the group has incorporated as a nonprofit, educational organization for tax purposes, the members can deduct some of their expenses, and the group probably purchases unit equipment with funds earned by appearances.

You should be aware of who owns the equipment for another reason. If you see the unit fully equipped in a large encampment at another historic site, you may expect to see the same reproduction artifacts at an encampment at your site. You will be disappointed if one or two members who personally own the equipment do not attend your event.

If members of the unit live any distance from your site, they will incur travel expenses. A unit of 100 may have only five local members, and those who live

elsewhere may be unwilling to travel to your site for an event. You need to get realistic estimates of both the number of participants and the size and variety of the camp from the unit's leaders. You may need to discuss reimbursement of travel expenses. If funding is available, a nominal payment of \$10 per participant is common for travel.

Food and powder are other expenses that you need to be aware of when planning an encampment. A well-organized group will plan meals in advance, demonstrate period cooking, and feed its members with the demonstration food. Individuals may roast meat on a stick or cook a pot of stew to serve the group. Others will feed themselves away from the period camp, and there are always a few who ask the directions to the nearest fast-food restaurant at the end of the day. It is to your advantage to have cooking demonstrated, either in camp or in your site kitchen. If you plan to provide the food to be cooked, be sure to talk with the person in charge of the camp kitchen first. The chief cook needs to know what equipment and condiments to have available and to plan the cooking interpretation. If you reimburse the group for food, \$2 per day per participant will cover most of the cost.

Black powder is used in both 18th- and 19th-century reproduction guns. If the group purchases powder in wholesale lots, it costs about five cents each time a musket or rifle is fired. If powder is purchased at retail prices, the cost doubles. At ten cents a shot, ten muskets firing ten times for your demonstration will cost \$10. Each shot from a three-pounder cannon costs about \$1.25 at wholesale rates.

The re-enactment group not only volunteers time and talent, but also absorbs many of the out-of-pocket costs for appearances at historic sites. A group will frequently charge large fees for parking cars at social events, firing guns at bank openings, and lending atmosphere at shopping centers. These monies, in a unit bank account, allow the group to appear at historic sites free-of-charge or for very low fees.

If you plan to pay the unit an honorarium or to reimburse its members for expenses, write one check to the unit. If the unit leaders want to pass the money on to reimburse individual members, that is their business. You do not want to write several small checks or spend time taking roll calls.

If you cannot pay a unit for an appearance, but plan to charge an entrance fee



The 20th century meets the 18th century during a re-enactment in Williamsburg, Virginia. Photograph by Carol C. Deakin.

to the public, be sure the group understands your budget problems and your need to raise funds. The members may resent your appearance of profiting from their good will. Most re-enactment groups, however, are pleased to help sites raise needed funds.

Most units will have some basic needs that you should plan to provide. Straw should be available for bedding. One bail is enough for three re-enactors sleeping in camp. There should be a water source close to the camp. You may want to run a hose from a faucet to a hidden spot near the camp kitchen. An enormous amount of water is used in cooking, cleaning pots,

and keeping buckets of drinking water full in camp, and water buckets should be kept near the campfire for emergencies.

The amount of wood needed varies depending on the kind of wood you provide. Softer woods burn quickly, so more is needed. Warn the unit before it arrives at your site if the wood will not be split. The unit's members may have the tools to do the splitting themselves and use this chore as a demonstration. Be sure to provide some kindling and to store at least part of the wood in a sheltered area to keep it dry. The fire will burn most of the night. In cool weather, the group may burn a cord of wood in the course of a

two-day encampment of 30 participants.

Find out from the unit's leaders how large a fire pit the group will need and where it will be placed. If you plan to conduct archaeological digs sometime in the future and do not want the ground disturbed, you can use a three inch layer of sand as a base on which to place a fire, thus avoiding the need to dig a pit. If you decide to use a fire pit, you may want to limit its depth. With a special shovel, you can remove just the sod and replace it after the event. Limitations on the depth of the pit may affect what food is cooked or how it is cooked, so be sure to include any such limitations in the written agreement and to inform the cooks. If you do not restrict the depth of the pit, remind the group to bring its own digging tools.

Rest rooms need to be open to the unit all night. In some cases, you may need to staff the site all night for security. Also, provide some form of emergency shelter. For a small group, this shelter might be one of your buildings, but for a large encampment, you may need to arrange access to a local school or church.

Discuss in advance any chores that you

will expect the group to handle. At the end of firing demonstrations, cartridge papers litter the field, and a cartridge full of powder may be dropped during the exercise. Let the group's leaders know if you expect the group to police the field or if your maintenance crew will do it. Provide the group's members with trash bags, and tell them where camp trash should be placed before the encampment reopens to the public on the second day.

Plan arrival and departure times with the group. Setting up and dismantling the camp is time-consuming, hard work. Understanding the time requirements will help you plan. You do not want to advertise the opening of the demonstration at a time before the camp is in working order.

The unit will rely on you for publicity of the event in the form of press releases, public service radio spots, posters, and fliers. Re-enactors want to perform for visitors. They become bored when there is no audience.

Having tracked the details, done your homework, found a compatible re-enactment unit, and produced a good

program, thank the group's members. Bake them a cake. Share research with them. Learn from them. Relax and enjoy the event. Your visitors know that the unit's members are pretending to be from another time. The visitors enjoy the event because it is fun. The re-enactors spend their time and money on their hobby because it is fun. That is why authentic re-enactments are events the public remembers.

More and more historic site administrators interpret museum artifacts by encouraging their visitors to think about the people who created and used the artifacts and the ideas and social values held by those people. If understanding people and ideas is a part of your interpretive goal, you may find working with re-enactment groups not only helpful but a joy. These actors on your stage help visitors reflect on people of the past. Progress and change and comparisons with the present are apparent to visitors before any words are spoken. When you expose visitors to historical theater, you unleash a truly powerful learning experience.

HN

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Westward Ho!

A Journey to the Golden State

The 1986 local arrangements committee presents tempting tidbits of the California dream to lure you to annual meeting in Oakland

There is plenty of gold so I've been told on the banks of the Sacramento.

BY L. THOMAS FRYE

When the Oakland Museum's invitation to hold an AASLH annual meeting in Oakland was first presented to the AASLH Council at the 1980 meeting in New Orleans, I think I was relieved it was not approved. Up until that moment I had thought little about what we would do if the conference did come to Oakland and the amount of work involved. Spared from further anxiety, I retreated to a nearby oyster bar, devoured a dozen oysters, washed down by a beer, and, letting my mind wander through the history of California, I contemplated what the California experience had meant to me. Sitting in New Orleans, I couldn't help but remember the great Mississippi river boat, the *Delta Queen*. She had not begun

L. Thomas Frye, chief curator of history at the Oakland Museum in Oakland, California, serves as the chair of the 1986 local arrangements committee for AASLH's annual meeting and is the secretary of AASLH's Council.



AASLH members attending annual meeting in Oakland, California, September 30-October 3, will join the "California Dreamers" in the Cowell Hall of California History at the Oakland Museum.

Steve Rahn

life on the Mississippi at all, but on the Sacramento River, ferrying passengers and cargo between San Francisco and Sacramento. She was towed to New Orleans after World War II and began a new and successful career, with an assumed identity as a Mississippi river steamer.

When the *Delta Queen* came South, she was running against the tide, for the history of California had been one of successive migrations to not from her lands. The rush to California began with the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill in 1848. The rush has occasionally been tempered, but it has never abated. Argonauts of '49 were followed by waves of others—dirt farmers, health seekers, land speculators, refugees, dust bowl migrants, war workers, flower children, and minorities—each seeking a piece of the “California dream.”

Historians such as Kevin Starr and James Rawls have argued persuasively that the concept of the “dream” has been part of California's essence from the time of the first people and is not, as some skeptics would argue, the creation of a Los Angeles publicist. Whether propelled by visions of “Glory, God, and Gold,” “Oranges for Health and California for

Wealth,” or a benevolent climate and miles of sand, surf, and sunshine, there has been sufficient reality for the dream to endure. In fact one of the key characteristics of the dream is its blend of illusion and reality. For the Beach Boys it was “the West Coast has the sunshine, and the girls all get so tan.” Two decades later the Eagles had changed the tune: “There is no more new frontier; we have to make it here.” For my grandfather who fled the boll weevil in Georgia in the 1920s, it was the lure of the vast orchards of the northern Sacramento Valley, but he never forgave the agricultural inspectors at the California border who unceremoniously confiscated his cherished feather bed from the top of his car.

For some, reality fell short of the dream. Still, for every person who left California disillusioned, there were more than enough eager new arrivals to take his or her place. As one discouraged '49er wrote, “I really hope that no one will be deterred from coming here. The more fools the better—the fewer to laugh when we get back home.” While many of us have attempted to explain the phenomenon of California culture, most Californians are

content to live it, even revel in it, and a good many have done exceedingly well at exporting it.

When the AASLH Council did vote to come to Oakland for an annual meeting, September 30-October 3, 1986, my old anxiety returned. We wanted people to experience the diversity of California. We wanted people to have a good time. We wanted a solid program linked to California's special character. And we wanted people to come. It seemed natural we had met in Louisville and Topeka, before Oakland—for AASLH a westward movement reminiscent of the history we interpret and teach. At the Oakland Museum, after reinstalling our permanent gallery on the California dream, we decided to take an exhibit on the California dream to Topeka, to give AASLH members attending the meeting an early peek at what they could expect when they came to California. So with colleagues Claudia Jurmain, Bill Wells, and Steve Barbata, we fashioned an exhibit complete with a redwood deck and table, a “Come To California” postcard mural, and a cornucopia of California symbols and icons ranging from fruits, vegetables,

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Make your plans now to attend the 1986 AASLH Annual Meeting. The registration fee for a current AASLH member is \$95, excluding the costs of special events. Other registrants may attend for \$125, which includes an AASLH membership at a \$10 discount.

Helpful ways to cut costs on airfares are listed in another advertisement in this magazine. Next month you will receive the preliminary program that lists information on all the sessions, premeeting workshops, hotels, and the exciting tours of the Bay Area.

For additional information, contact Jim Gardner at AASLH, 172 Second Avenue North, Suite 102, Nashville, TN 37201 (615) 255-2971.

Come to Oakland and learn.

wines, and breads to packets of poppy seeds. In the midst of it all sat California's chief export to the world, Mickey Mouse.

With time running short, Barbata reluctantly agreed to drive his old hippie van—an artifact in its own right—to Topeka carrying the assembled array of California culture. The van, we were warned, had not run in four years. It was Kansas or bust, with some of us putting our money on the latter. On his odyssey, Barbata suffered three breakdowns in deserted areas. He was stopped by a suspicious small town sheriff, who, luckily, did not discover the stash of poppy seeds. He was engaged in a game of “chicken” on a desolate stretch of Nevada highway by a couple of aggressive youths and nearly fell victim to a raging storm high in the Rockies. Yet on the morning the exhibit hall was to open, there stood a sleepless Barbata—van and exhibit intact. Our fears that the California dream had turned into a nightmare were unfounded. The exhibit went up, and the show went on.

If any AASLH annual meeting participants failed to catch the California spirit from the display, it was not evident. Our greatest fear was that the display would disappear before our eyes, bit by bit, postcard by plastic orange. Everyone, it seemed, wanted a piece of the California dream to take home. To constant queries of “What’s going to happen to all this stuff?” we assumed a coy wait-and-see attitude, while we sought to answer that question for ourselves. People’s craving for the assembled wines, produce, and ephemera of California led us to the inevitable conclusion: let’s *really* give them a taste of California and let them *eat* the exhibit. So, on the final day of annual meeting, we held a wine tasting at which everything edible (the week-old sourdough bread would have served better as a weapon than as an hors d’oeuvre) was devoured. As supplies dwindled, the wine “connoisseurs” failed to notice when the vintage wines of the display became the cheap (yet still California) wines hastily procured from the hotel liquor store. Even avocados made their appearance in style, through no small search on our part and the noble efforts of an eager-to-please Kansas caterer, in the form of mounds of guacamole. And over all of this presided Mickey Mouse, our symbol of California.

Our reception and our invitation to come to the 1986 annual meeting in Oakland were met with an overwhelmingly



AASLH members will find Mickey Mouse waiting to greet them when they arrive in Oakland for AASLH's annual meeting.

positive response. Proof to us, it was, that the nation does indeed share in the California dream. In light of these findings, the theme of the Oakland conference, “From Dreams to Reality,” seems apt. For many, it is a dream vacation. For the millions who have made California their homes, it is the dream of sunshine and adventure, opportunity and freedom. For AASLH members, it is the dream of learning or professional growth, of meeting with colleagues and—we hope—a little of some of the above.

* * *

BY RONALD WOGAMAN

David Hooper, state archivist at the Arizona Department of Library, Archives, and Public Records, and his 1986 program committee have identified six program tracks to lure you to the AASLH annual meeting in Oakland, September 30-October 3, 1986. Session offerings range from theoretical musings to meat-and-potatoes to take home and apply directly to your job.

Sessions on *professional development and management* will provide basic training for newcomers to the field and continuing education for middle and advanced professionals.

Nuts-and-bolts sessions on *collections*

Ronald Wogaman, interpretive specialist-history at the Oakland Museum, in Oakland, California, serves on the 1986 local arrangements committee for AASLH's annual meeting.

management will feature direct, practical applications to the work of historical agencies.

Space age *technologies* are much on the minds of many AASLH members. Specialists and history personnel experienced in the area will discuss planning and implementing the use of modern technology, from word processors to optical disks.

Excellent sessions are planned in the area of *public history* to consider the application of historical skills beyond the historical agency.

The broad topic of *interpretation and exhibition development* will be tackled in sessions conducted by museum personnel and professional designers.

How to get the bucks is a question on everyone's minds in these days of shrinking grant funds. Identifying and implementing strategies for *marketing and fund raising* for historical agencies is a program track for 1986.

California, in its position at the cutting edge of national trends, is the perfect laboratory for viewing current developments in each of these major areas. California panelists will represent the state's innovative and exemplary museums and historical agencies, while conference day trips and post-conference



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tours will offer the opportunity to combine business with pleasure. Tour groups will receive special welcomes as they travel to meet with staff members of sites throughout northern California and to enjoy the beauty and splendor of the region.

Day trips on Thursday, October 2, will explore the historic districts in Oakland—from Victorian and Art Deco to monumental (a cemetery walk)—and in San Francisco—Beaux Arts to Chinatown. The academics among us might prefer lunch and an afternoon walking tour on the University of California's Berkeley campus, with visits to the Bancroft Library and the Lowie Museum, and then a bus trip into Berkeley Hills to visit a cluster of Bernard Maybeck-designed homes. Historic houses, the fine military museums circling the Bay, the federal prison on Alcatraz, and the renowned Exploratorium, prototype for participatory exhibitry, all will open their doors with a special AASLH welcome. One tour will venture as far as Sacramento for a jam-packed day to marvel at the computer wizardry of the new Sacramento History Center, the dazzling exhibits at the California State Railroad Museum, the exquisite restoration of the State Capitol, and a walk through California history and art at the Crocker Art Museum.

On Saturday, October 4, we invite you to turn your attention from conference halls to countryside on a busman's holiday. One-day and two-day post-meeting tours will journey far afield from Oakland in search of the California dream amid the hills and valleys of northern California. The beautiful Sonoma Valley, with its vineyards and historic wineries, is the destination of one tour. The charming town of Sonoma, site of the Bear Flag Revolt, boasts the Sonoma Mission (the last of California's chain of 21 missions) and the nearby Gothic Victorian home of General Mariano Vallejo. A visit to a California jack cheese factory should restore any tipsy souls after tastings at the Sebastiani and Buena Vista wineries.

Contra Costa County, extending east beyond the hills of Oakland, holds a varied history of the Bay area's early development. The Old Borges Ranch, the oldest continuously active cattle ranch on the West Coast, is a living museum of early California's rural life. For those on this day trip, the ranch will be the scene of a rousing picnic lunch. John Muir, California's foremost conservationist, called Contra Costa home for 24 years. His 17-room mansion, farm, and grounds

will be opened for your inspection. Less romantic than gold, but important nevertheless, were the soft coal and sand mines of the region. The sites of the forgotten mining towns of Nortonville and Somersville will be visited, and the brave-of-heart may descend into an original mineshaft, now part of the East Bay Regional Park District.

For those seeking a true California vacation, two-day tours will wind northward up the rugged Pacific coast to Mendocino and south to lovely Monterey. Highlights of the northern tour include Sun House, a cultural center documenting the heritage of California's Pomo Indians, and the Mendocino County Museum, said to present the county's past in such a way that even the inveterate museum-hater will love. We hope to travel overland through towering redwoods to Fort Bragg and the Fort Bragg City Museum, the former guest house for the town's chief industry, the Union Lumber Company. After spending the night in Fort Bragg and enjoying a morning walking tour of the community, participants, traveling back to the Bay area through the Anderson Valley, will stop at several fine wineries.

Those journeying to the south will first visit the restored plaza of San Juan Bautista, with its extensive living history programs, before moving on to Monterey, so important in California's early Spanish history. Important to Monterey's current history is the Monterey Bay Aquarium, where you will wonder at the marine underworld as well as the innovative methods and standards set by the staff of this major, new facility. On the return trip to Oakland, you will have a chance to stroll along the Santa Cruz Boardwalk, with its restored casino, and perhaps thrill on the dips and dives of its giant roller coaster.

Specific tour details and costs will appear in the June issue of HISTORY NEWS DISPATCH. Tour registration is limited to avoid crowding and to ensure a good time for all, so make your reservations early, using the preliminary program you will receive next month.

Evening events will sparkle as much as the day sessions will stimulate. The 1986 local arrangements committee has been busy for months distilling the California experience into a whirlwind week of receptions, tours, and entertainment. Tuesday evening will provide a perfect introduction to the San Francisco Bay area aboard the elegantly appointed ship, *The City of San Francisco*. In a way, you

will see the Bay area from the inside out. (We'll make sure you stay dry in the process.) From your point of embarkation on the historic Oakland waterfront, you will sail along the shorelines of Berkeley and Marin, bush close by Alcatraz, the isle of pelicans, cruise along San Francisco's Embarcadero, and pass near the Golden Gate to enjoy sunset over the Pacific. The three enclosed decks of our ship will be the scene of period entertainment and appearances by "historic" people.

On Wednesday, the party moves into "the City," as San Francisco has been known throughout California since its Gold Rush beginnings. The Old Mint, a stately witness of those robust beginnings (it is said that rugs at the Mint were periodically burned to retrieve gold dust spilled by careless miners), will house the President's Reception honoring outgoing AASLH president Robert W. Richmond and incoming president Linda V. Ellsworth. In addition to exhibits relating to its history, The Old Mint's gold room is sure to set your eyes aglow with gold fever. From here, the action moves to staid and respectable Pacific Heights, a neighborhood of the Victorian homes of successful capitalists of the day. Here, on house visits and a neighborhood walking tour, you will find the Whittier Mansion, home of the California Historical Society, and the Haas-Lilienthal House of the Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. The party will really shift into high gear on the National Park Service's Hyde Street Pier, where you may kick up your heels in a hornpipe or two.

The Oakland Museum intends to live up to its reputation for giving great parties when it throws open its galleries and gardens on Friday evening for a grand conference finale. The museum's 20th-century exhibits and, of course, the California dream provide the inspiration for this special evening. The garden terraces and the art, history, and ecology galleries will be the settings for food, fun, entertainment, and a few surprises. So you had better plan to be there. A hint—don't forget to pack your peddlepushers and aloha shirts!

The 1986 annual meeting in Oakland promises to offer something for everyone, and a lot for all of you—outstanding sessions, unique special events, and tours tailored for our history audience. And it will all be set against the lovely backdrop of the San Francisco Bay. The California dream is calling to you. Make plans to be there—September 30-October 3, 1986.

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The American Association For State And Local History, along with Cambridge Lord Corporation, has arranged special guaranteed discounts off of coach fares with American Airlines, Eastern Airlines, and PSA exclusively for those attending the AASLH annual meeting in Oakland. These discounts are valid for round-trip travel to the meeting city, two days prior to two days after your meeting date. The procedure is simple just call the airlines' convention desk best suited for your departure city to make your reservation. Always ask for the lowest available airfare. They will confirm reservations on other airlines if lower fares happen to be available. You can pay by credit card or be invoiced and your ticket will be mailed to your home or office.

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"The Healing Arts in Early America"

The Fraunces Tavern Museum mounts
a major exhibit on 17th- and 18th-century
medical practices

REVIEW BY EDWARD JAY PERSHEY

The history of medicine challenges any museum that chooses to interpret it to any audience, general or special. It is with some courage, then, that the Fraunces Tavern Museum in New York City chose to mount "The Healing Arts in Early America," a exhibition that attempts, according to Curator Robert I. Goler, to bring into interpretive focus "attitudes towards healing and sickness in the British colonies of North America." The exhibit essentially looks at medicine as practiced in what eventually became the United States, from the beginning of the 17th to the end of the 18th century.

The exhibit digests this rather broad topic with the "gastric juices" of incisive, careful, original research conducted almost exclusively at institutions other than the museum itself. To the credit of the museum and especially of Goler, the exhibit's project director and curator, this

bountiful meal of information produces only occasional mild indigestion. But what a feast! The museum borrowed more than 140 items—all first-class, choice representatives of medical history—from 70 different lenders, produced an excellent catalogue, and hosted a series of special lectures, a film series, special school programs, and a symposium.

The exhibit opened at the Fraunces Tavern Museum at the corner of Pearl and Broad streets in lower Manhattan, on December 6, 1985, and will run through August 1, 1986. Museum professionals attending the American Association of Museums annual meeting in New York City this June should make an effort to see the exhibit.

"The Healing Arts in Early America" views the activities involved in healing, pain relief, treatment of traumatic illness, midwifery, and the care of the ill, old, and disabled as part of the establishment of communities on the North American continent during the 17th and 18th centuries. To discuss the overall theme, the exhibit uses 13 topical segments: medicine in the 17th century, native Americans, medicine in the 18th century, training and practice, drugs and apothecaries, bloodletting, epidemics, home medicine, midwifery, dentistry, medicine and the American Revolution, electrical treatment, and finally institutions, societies, and waterworks. These sections reflect the energetic scope of the exhibit

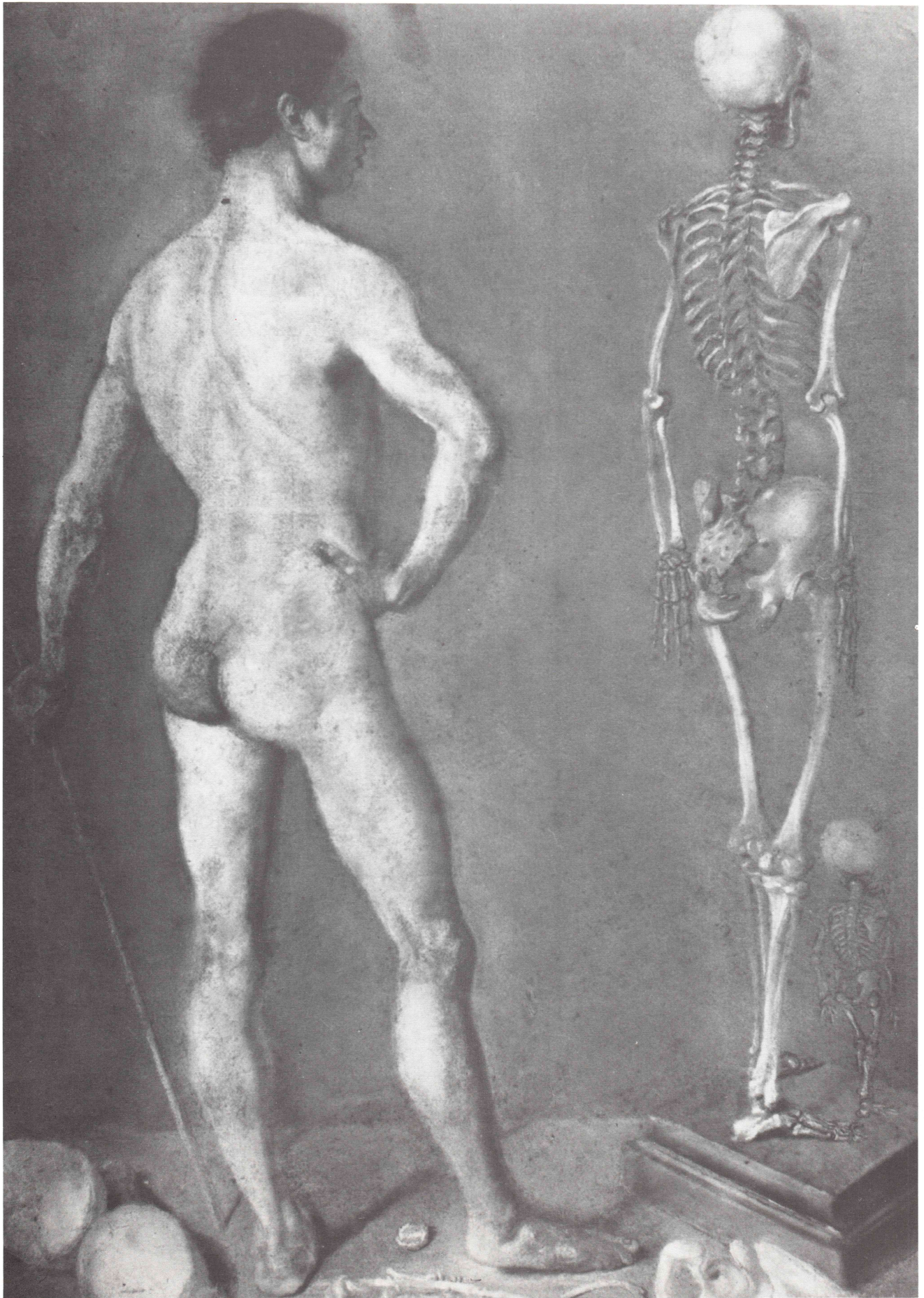
as well as the careful, intellectual work that went into its planning and execution.

The first settlers brought with them the medical practices of England and Europe, of course. This basic premise is clearly stated in the introduction to the exhibit. The humoral theory of disease, the role of private and public virtue in individual health, witchcraft, and the environment—all were important theoretical bases for determining causes of and cures for human illness. The exhibit carefully explains that these ideas were not the bewildering and strange misgivings of an ignorant people, but rather were a set of reasonable beliefs and techniques. As the exhibit points out, theories and methods were used and sustained because they were in some way effective; they produced positive results. People in pain in the 18th century were no more prepared than you and I are now to continue the use of medicines that did not work.

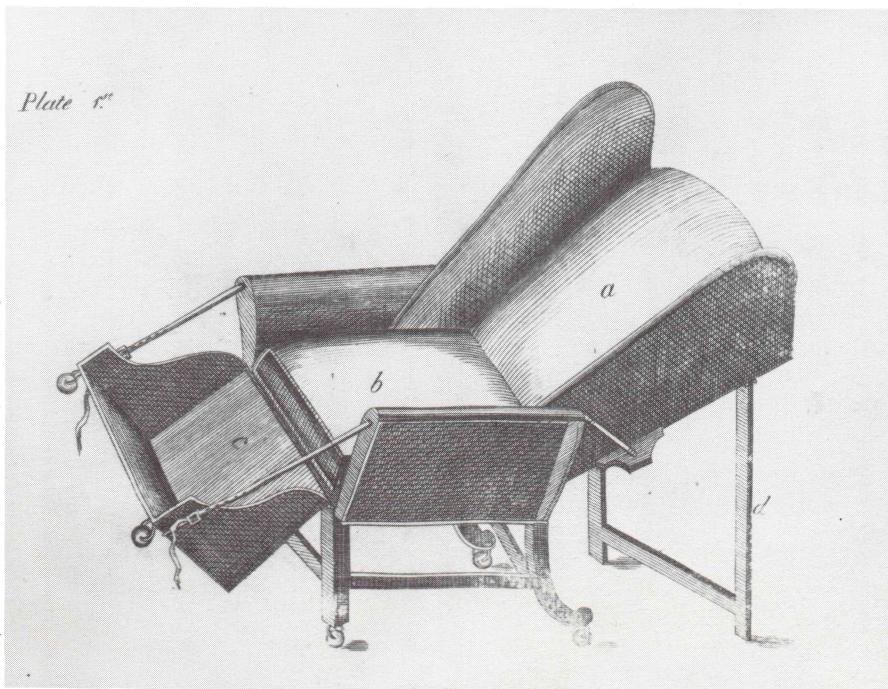
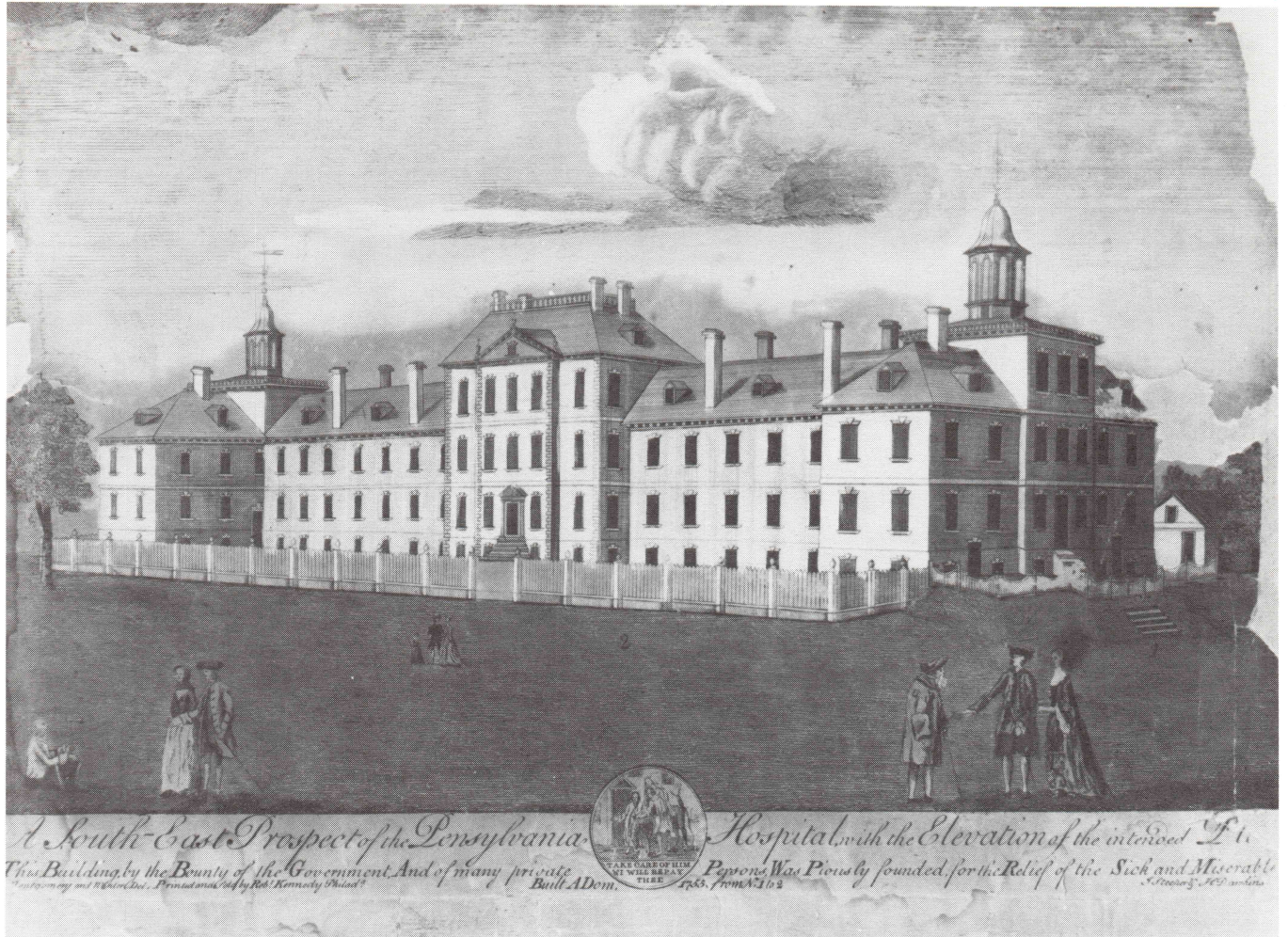
From the transplanted European and English medicine, there developed a peculiarly American kind of medicine, which incorporated the practices learned

Edward Jay Pershey has been the supervisory museum curator at the Edison National Historic Site in West Orange, New Jersey, since 1981. Prior to that, he was at the Howard Dittrick Museum of Historical Medicine in Cleveland. Pershey is involved in the Society for the History of Technology's special-interest group that promotes museum exhibits as legitimate forums for historical inquiry. He and Reese Jenkins of Rutgers University are currently planning a major traveling exhibit, "Edison and the Art of Invention," to open in 1987.

The c. 1760 "Anatomical Drawing of a Model with Two Skeletons," by John Bagnold Burgess, was one of 17 anatomical studies that the London physician John Fothergill donated to the Pennsylvania Hospital in 1762. The drawing, from the collection of the hospital in Philadelphia, is included in "The Healing Arts in Early America."



Courtesy of the Fraunces Tavern Museum, New York City



from native Americans and experimentation with new plants and minerals and which necessarily adjusted for the lack of trained physicians, the appearance of unfamiliar diseases, and, apparently, a diet rich in meat and alcohol. The section on home medicine reminds the visitor, though possibly not as forthrightly as it could have, that Americans have been treating themselves and each other at home with various "cures" for centuries. If anything marks American medical history, it is its strong tradition of home remedies.

In its description of the development of American medical ideas, the exhibit explains the practices of phlebotomy (bloodletting), electrotherapy, surgery, and dentistry. The therapeutics presented seem particularly unusual when one compares them with current medical ideas about good health care. It is impossible not to cringe at the thought of amputating limbs without anesthesia or antiseptics, or wrenching a tooth from the jaw, or opening veins to reduce the body's blood volume.

While the artifacts for such therapies

The Pennsylvania Hospital was the first such facility to open its doors in the British Colonies of North America. From the collection of the Library Company of Philadelphia, this print by John Steeper and Henry Dawkins was issued around 1761. "The Healing Arts in Early America" includes both the hospital print and the engraving of an "easy chair. . . useful for lying-in women and such persons" from Charles White's *A Treatise on the Management of Pregnant and Lying-in Women*.

are well selected and identified, I would have preferred to see along with them presentations of ways in which they were actually used. How, indeed, did a physician or therapist apply static electricity to a patient? Was the patient sitting, standing, or lying down? How did it feel? Where was it done?

In many ways medicine is more akin to technology than it is to science or art. Process and the idea of process lie at the very heart of technology and, likewise, offer important avenues for understanding medicine. This exhibit displays excellent examples of cupping sets and bleeding kits in elegant and attractive ways. However, the process of cupping requires a series of actions on the part of the doctor. The labels in this exhibit verbally describe the process very concisely but do not impart a understanding that "wet cupping," for example, is not a simple, nor an easy, process to master.

Similarly, the label for the engraving that depicts George Washington succumbing to the severity of his doctors' therapeutics clearly indicates that even contemporary physicians considered their colleagues' use of phlebotomy excessive. However, the exhibit does not take the opportunity then to reinforce one of its own major themes: that for all the severity of removing 96 ounces of blood from the ill and aging Washington in 1799, the doctors' therapeutics were nonetheless guided by a system of medical care. The good doctors were applying medical *process* to the full extent of their knowledge.

In discussing the intellectual organization of the exhibit, Goler points out that all of the illustrations are original items from the period and that the total effort of the exhibit was to interpret Colonial medicine within its own time and on its own ground. Hence, exhibit planners decided not to use specially prepared graphics or try to relate historical medical issues to current concerns, as for instance in the possibility of relating 18th-century ideas about personal virtue as means of maintaining health to ideas today about the relationship of personal virtue to a disease such as AIDS. I firmly believe in the kind of pure cultural analysis that Goler chose for "The Healing Arts in Early America." However, the process of interpretation necessarily means presenting the topic to visitors in relationship to their own culture—making it understandable and possibly relevant. This usually requires clear, didactic explanations.



The "Healing Arts in Early America" includes various medical instruments used in the 17th and 18th centuries. At the far left is an electrostatic generator.

Courtesy of the Frances Taven Museum, New York City

The strength of the exhibit lies in Goler's original research. He has collected an impressive group of artifacts and produced clear, concise, and extremely understandable labels.

The collection is, quite frankly, stunning. Especially unusual is the 18th-century electrostatic machine borrowed from the Bakken Library of Electricity in Life, Minneapolis, a fine example of early medical therapeutic technology. The many original documents and books provide not only a rich textual context but evidence, as well, of the exhibit's solid

historical foundation. (Since the exhibit catalogue contains the complete label texts, it would be quite useful, although bureaucratically and legally difficult, to offer a complete set of color slides of all the material in the exhibit. The slides and catalogue would make an unusually solid and cohesive teaching tool.)

Each of the 13 segments begins with an introductory label of no more than three or four paragraphs. These excellent labels summarize the sub-themes. The number of items displayed in each of the 13 sections varies from as few as five to

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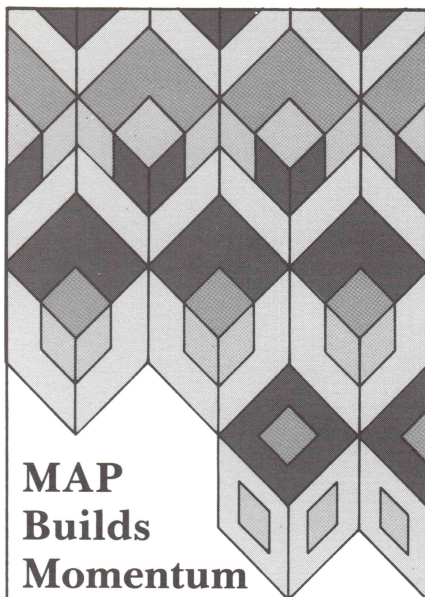
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more than 20. A label identifies each item, and almost all have a paragraph or two of explanatory narrative.

Some of the sections, particularly those on training and practice, bloodletting, and dentistry, group the artifacts into cases, which implies to me some relationship among them. Of course, there is the overriding theme of the section, but the cases contain only the individual labels for each artifact. These groupings need some kind of intermediate interpretive message in addition to the excellent individual labels. In the segment on training and practice, which groups artifacts in several fixed, historical cases, the potency of cohesiveness needed to keep the objects interpreted within the sub-theme was lost by the last case. Visitors could use a gentle reminder by then of the main point of the sequence.

One last comment on labeling repeats a plea from this exhibit goer and many of my cohorts: please produce labels with dark type on a light background! While white on black—or in the case of this exhibit, an off-white on a brick red—may look stunning, in low light levels or in long labels it just provokes too much eye strain. Half of the introductory labels were produced dark-on-light, while the other half and all the individual item labels were light-on-dark. Although this particular color scheme presents a pleasing and richly textured effect, some of the labels in reverse colors are just too difficult to read.

The museum installed this exhibit, which will not travel, in two small galleries on its third floor. The designers and Goler decided to avoid a maze-like path through the exhibit in order to retain as much open space as possible. The exhibit has a nice feel to it, and it entices the visitor to spend some time viewing the artifacts; however, this was accomplished, in part, at the expense of traffic flow. At several points it becomes difficult to identify the sequence of the exhibit or to which segment the artifacts belong. Because the exhibit is not large, these are not serious problems, but I found it useful to have the catalogue along as a reference.

It is exhilarating that an exhibit of this size and funding (modest in both cases) can in fact focus on central questions in the way medical history is interpreted. "The Healing Arts in Early America" is an intelligent and thoroughly professional investigation of medical history using traditional exhibit techniques.

The exhibit itself is only part of "The

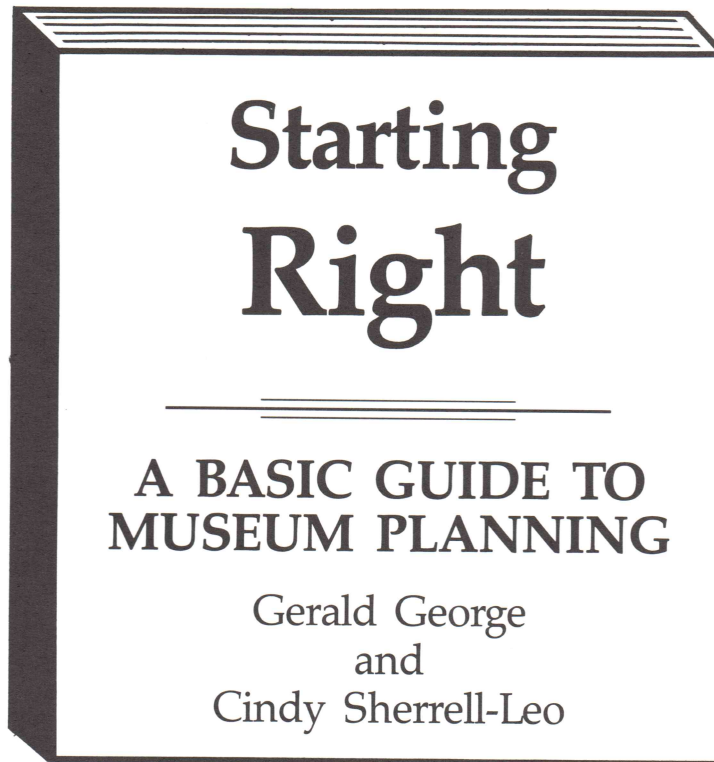
Healing Arts in Early America." The museum presented a series of lunch-time lectures, which brought in first-rate speakers on the history of medicine to the museum's immediate constituency—those who work on Wall Street as well as others in the metropolitan area. A film series, "The Healing Arts Film Festival," presented three films with medical themes on consecutive Sundays in January and February. In April the museum hosted a professional historical symposium, "Interpreting Medical History and Understanding its Importance in the Study of Early American Life." Finally the museum developed educational programming for primary school groups to do some hands-on investigations of the role of medicine in everyday life in the 18th century by relating that role to our current ideas about health care. (I was pleased to see that a number of the students from a Brooklyn special education class were able to identify such 18th-century items as a toothkey and invalid feeding cup as these were passed around by a well-trained docent.)

Funding for the exhibit came from a number of sources, but the museum received major and critically timed grants from the New York State Council on the Arts. A special gift from the Metropolitan Life Foundation permitted the publication of the exhibit catalogue. The catalogue is available for \$5 (plus \$1 for shipping) from the Fraunces Tavern Museum, 54 Pearl Street, New York, New York 10004. Goler's footnotes and bibliography, as well as the complete label text, make this an excellent resource for early American medical history. Consultants on the project were John Duffy, Thomas Schlereth, Lorena Walsh, and Shomer Zwelling. The Leone Design Group handled design and production. Credit should be given to the museum's administration, especially Director Christine Miles (now director of the Albany Institute of History and Art) for allowing Goler, the museum's curator of collections, to travel to many different repositories throughout the United States and, hence, committing the museum to original research.

Although innovative exhibit techniques might have been useful in explaining the role of specific artifacts, "The Healing Arts in Early America" still provides the visitor with an accurate and complete picture of what it was like to be ill and seek relief in a society removed from us by time and cultural change.

HN

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Gerald George and Cindy Sherrell-Leo

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a museum is both philosophically and historically, discusses the pros and cons of establishing any given museum, outlines where to get help, and proffers advice on all aspects of museums from the choice of a building through collections care, registration, exhibits, conservation, and staffing to financial management and fund raising.

Gerald George is director of the American Association for State and Local History. Cindy Sherrell-Leo is director of the museum and field services department of the Texas Historical Commission.

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THE FUND RAISER

Eye-to-eye gift giving

BY MARK LANE

"I can't ask people for money. I'll volunteer to do anything else, but just don't ask me to raise money." You've heard it before. You may have even said it yourself. But in the museum profession, asking for money is a fact of life.

People very rarely take notice of a good cause or someone doing a good job and decide on their own to make a contribution, though the occasional gift of this nature does make headlines. You should remember to ask, ask, ask. This in turn helps you remember why you became involved in your organization.

In beginning a fund-raising drive, call on your best prospects first to set the pace and strengthen your confidence. If possible, ask for contributions in person rather than by telephone or letter. It's more difficult to say no to someone face-to-face, and a personal visit makes an organization seem more human. Remember, people give money to people. Institutions are neither warm nor personal, so it's important that individuals representing museums project these qualities to prospects.

If you send a letter of introduction before visiting a prospect, include several elements. The letter should contain thanks for past support or a personal reason why the prospect is being solicited. In addition, mention details about your institution or the project needing funding, and describe achievements of your organization and future goals. Finally, be sure to let the prospect know that you'll telephone him or her in a few days to schedule a meeting.

In asking someone for money, be assertive. Prospects are looking for signs that individuals are serious about their organizations. And don't hesitate to ask family and friends for money—after all, who buys Girl Scout cookies?

Perhaps the greatest single characteristic of a successful call on donors and prospects is enthusiasm. Use it in your voice, manner, and choice of words. When thinking about why a person would give money to an organization,

Mark Lane is the director of the Witte Museum of the San Antonio Museum Association in Texas. The museum association is currently engaged in a fund-raising campaign to secure support for operating expenses, an endowment, and capital improvements.

think about why you give. Although your prospect's motives will be similar to your own, it is helpful to research the giving histories of the person or business you are approaching.

The face-to-face meeting can be rewarding. Either you or a mutual contact should schedule the appointment before 11 a.m. or after 2 p.m. During a normal workday, most individuals feel dull and drowsy after eating lunch and don't pick back up again until around 2 p.m.

When you meet your prospect, the first few minutes are the most important for creating a good impression. Always remember to smile and maintain eye contact. Do not smoke. Watch for the prospect's comfort and have empathy for his or her reactions. When possible or appropriate, you should also establish a common ground of friends, interests, or similar jobs during the introduction. If the prospect feels a common bond with you, your chances of receiving a gift are greatly improved. However, your time and the prospect's time are valuable, so too much small talk can be detrimental.

Remember to present the most important facts first to a potential donor. The use of visual devices and testimonials will also give a sense of reality, organization, and concreteness. Describe the romance of the project, the dream, the people, the idea, and the story.

Other details to consider in asking a potential donor for money are:

- Know the interests of the prospect. People give money for feelings of satisfaction and fulfillment. Direct your conversation to meet those needs.
- When you don't know something say, "I don't know, but I'll find out," and then do it. It makes your institution look good to call back with follow-up information.
- Ask about friends who might be interested in supporting the project. If your prospect is enthusiastic about your project and is making a gift, he or she may call friends and accompany you to visit them.
- Mention that you are a donor yourself, though there is no need to mention the amount you have given. The prospect will feel you are committed and that he or she is joining others in supporting the cause.
- When asking, look the prospect in the eye, and use a bold, clear voice to say, "We are hoping you can help us with a \$500 contribution," or "Can you help us with a \$500 to \$1,000 gift?" Keep looking the


prospect in the eye, and don't say anything after asking. (Practice your comfortable stare.) The tendency is to continue talking because of the tension of the moment. Do not say anything for a few seconds. If the prospect says your request is too high, ask, "What would you feel comfortable giving?"

- Remember that it is acceptable to ask for more money than the prospect can afford to give. Generally donors interpret the gesture as a compliment.
- Objections and criticisms don't necessarily mean a negative response. Prospects only want to hear your answer. Remember, you can say, "I'll find out."
- Fast answers look like you are a "know-it-all." Wait a second or two, reflecting, and then answer. Spend no more than 30 seconds on answers to criticisms, and return to positive reasons for giving.
- Each time you ask someone for money, you probably have increased the odds of the prospect giving in the future, whether he or she gives at this time or not. The prospect becomes personally connected to your institution. He or she does not like to let the asker down and, in the future, feels a slight sense of obligation to make up for a "no" reply.
- If a potential donor asks for time to think about it or respond, set a time for a follow-up meeting.
- Always write a thank-you note regardless of the response.

In asking for money, approach people with courtesy. Keep in mind that you are not asking for money for yourself. Your request should come from the merits of the project and your own willingness to support the organization.

It is a wonderful thrill when someone grants your request. People will think you have nerves of steel to ask successfully for money. And you'll feel good about helping others recognize the value of your organization and bringing them to contribute toward its future. **HN**

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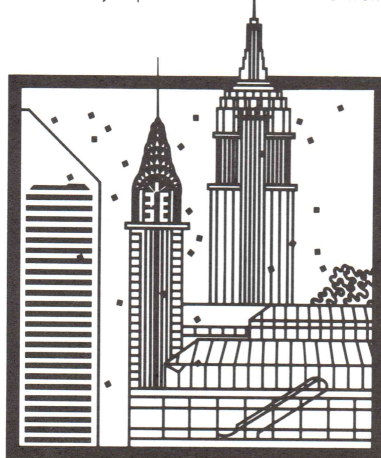
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THE BOOKSHELF

All About Old Buildings: The Whole Preservation Catalogue

Diane Maddex, Editor

The Preservation Press (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036), 1985.

436 pp.; 1,000 illustrations, bibliography, index, appendix. \$24.95 paperbound, \$39.95 clothbound.

REVIEW BY T. ALLAN COMP

History, at least good history, begins with research, which calls for lots of looking and even more reading. Historians have learned to rely on research guides and bibliographies to make their efforts efficient and productive. Historical preservation, with its best methodological roots deep in history, enjoys few such guides. The range of concerns within historical preservation, the local focus of so many activities, and the constant press of things that must be done make such a guide seem nearly impossible to produce. As a result, at least until the publication of *All About Old Buildings*, practitioners of historical preservation were doomed to re-invent the wheel again and again. Literally thousands of us all over the United States learned the hard way, unaware of work done elsewhere that would benefit our own efforts.

T. Allan Comp is a former chief of cultural resources with the National Park Service in Seattle, Washington. He is now in the private sector, specializing in the development and management of historic structures and districts.

The field now owes the National Trust for Historic Preservation and editor Diane Maddex a vote of appreciation for ending the "era of ignorance" and making possible a new "era of awareness." Inside this 9 x 12 inch book are 6,500 entries and 1,000 illustrations spread over more than 400 pages. Fifteen chapters address everything you ever wanted to know about historical preservation and a number of areas you may never have realized are part of the field. The chapters range from an examination of the early intellectual roots of the preservation movement to current perspectives in a remarkably wide variety of fields and topics. Within each chapter, there are entries from the big and the small, the rural and the urban, and everything in between. There are also chapters on who's who among preservation institutions; on organizing, fund raising, education, and preservation law; and several on historic buildings and rehabilitation.

Even better, the book is the *Whole Preservation Catalogue*—not a book of prose, but a catalogue of sources, information, books, articles, and institutions that can help. Should you decide to pick up the book for a quick read, find a comfortable seat first. Among the entries are hundreds of brief quotations that intrigue the intellect as effectively as the attractive book design engages the eye. ("All styles are good except the boring kind," Voltaire, 1736.) Instead of the usual source guide packed with bibliographic entries and nothing else, this book is a wellspring for the mind and eye. The bibliographic entries are remarkably accessible, and the occasional cartoons, superb photographs, and quotations will keep one reading long into the night. As is the case with researching old newspapers, the distractions are sometimes more interesting than the topic under study. Maddex does a great job of educating the reader by attracting him or her to read further.

This is also a difficult book to review. Not that it isn't engaging and informative to the point of saturation, it's just hard to keep on one's desk long enough to review. When first received by AASLH, the book immediately disappeared from the book review editor's desk and into several offices in need of its information. When I finally did get the book, I innocently loaned it to the county offices in a very small county (population, 1,500) and then had to chase

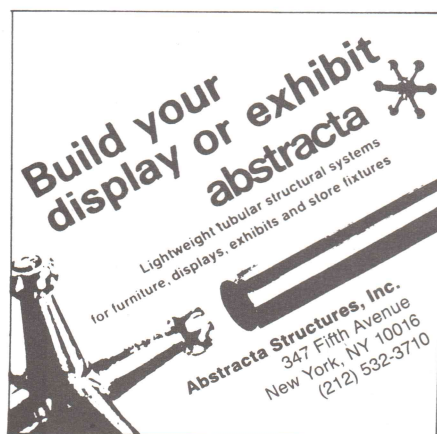
it through five different departments before I finally got it back. Such immediate recognition of utility is a significant accomplishment for any book but is hard on reviewers.

Given the tremendous boost this work provides for communication among all the disparate fields of historical preservation, small criticisms pale into insignificance. Somewhere among those 400,000 words, there must be a mention of an excellent periodical called *Small Towns*, but I couldn't find it. The list of undergraduate and graduate programs in historical preservation itemizes only programs conferring degrees, skipping many other good programs that offer certificates within professional fields like architecture, history, or planning. Most of the bibliographic entries are briefly annotated, but some are not, and one wishes they were. Readers would find an index of works cited helpful, but that would probably add another 100 expensive pages to the book. It would also eliminate the welcome excuse to peruse several different sections of the book, catch a few more refreshing quotations, and add to one's understanding of all that is the historical preservation field.

Just how Maddex and those who assisted her managed to pull this information together must be a story in itself. The enormity of the task and the currency of the information lead one to want some way of adding to it as new information becomes available. One hopes the National Trust and the National Endowment for the Arts, which supported the book's initial development, are now making plans to do just that. *All About Old Buildings* is now the most important and comprehensive source in the field. Its contents, its omissions, and its currency will shape the direction of historical preservation because it is to this book that most preservationists will turn and from this book that the entire field will draw its bibliographic direction and some of its intellectual inspiration as well.

"The era of ignorance"—or at least all the excuses for it—ended with the publication of this book. Combining massive amounts of accessible and clearly presented bibliographic information with engaging quotations, good graphic design, helpful lists, and broad perspective, *All About Old Buildings* captures the diversity and depth of historical preservation. The human meaning and cultural value of our surviving historic landscapes, districts, and structures deserve nothing less.

HN



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Betty Pease Smith, *Editor*

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genealogical depositories, oral history centers, folklore societies, living history groups, libraries and archival depositories, and other groups related to the history field.

This edition also includes: an expanded special index section, which lists groups and organizations by category of interest or affiliations; photographs of historical sites across North America; and a Suppliers Section, full of display advertisements featuring the best products and services available to the historical agency and museum field.

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